

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIMA 03526 252213 Z

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 CU-04 OMB-01 NIC-01 EUR-25

RSR-01 /132 W

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P 252116 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5653

INFO USCINCSO/ QUARRY HTS CZ

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PINS, PE

SUBJECT: LABOR DISPUTE TURNS INTO ANTI- MILGOV RIOT IN CHIMBOTE

1. RIOT IN CHIMBOTE (PERU' S PRINCIPAL FISHING CENTER) BY STUDENTS AND WORKERS MAY 24 LEFT ONE DEAD, SEVERAL SERIOUSLY WOUNDED (INCLUDING CGTP EX- STEELWORKERS UNION CHIEF CRISTOBAL ESPINOLA M.), EXTENSIVE PROPERTY DAMAGE AND REPORTEDLY OVER 100 ARRESTED. RIOT BEGAN DURING EFFECTIVE ONE- DAY GENERAL STRIKE CALLED BY ANCASH DEPARTMENTAL LABOR FEDERATION (CTP/ APRISTA MAJORITY) SUPPORTING STRIKERS AT GOP- OWNED STEEL MILL (INDEPENDENT/ MIXED BAG) AND FACTIONAL DISPUTE BY DISSIDENT FISHWORKERS (COMMUNISTS/ RADICAL LEFTISTS/ APRISTAS).

2. WHEN POLICE OPENED FIRE AS STRIKERS BEGAN THROWING STONES IN ATTEMPT TO OUSTS UNPOPULAR CTRP PRO- MILGOV FISHWORKERS SEC GEN FRANCO BACA B., GENERAL RIOTING BECAME DIRECTED CLEARLY AT MILGOV. SINAMOS HEADQUARTERS ATTACKED AND DAMAGED. RIOTING REPORTEDLY WAS CONTINUING ON REDUCED SCALE LAST NIGHT DESPITE IMPOSITION OF CURFEW.

3. COMMENT: CTP' S GENERAL STRIKE ONLY A FEW DAYS PREVIOUSLY
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PAGE 02 LIMA 03526 252213 Z

(LIMA 3381) HAD VERY LIMITED SUCCESS IN CHIMBOTE, AND WE ARE UNWARE OF CTP OR APRA SUPPORT OR PLANNING AT NATIONAL LEVEL FOR THE CHIMBOTE STRIKE AND INCIDENTS. THEY SEEM TO HAVE ORIGINATED OVER LOCAL ISSUES AND WE HAVE NO PRESENT INDICATION OCCURRENCE WAS IN PROTEST AGAINST GOP' S RECENTLY ANNOUNCED NATIONALIZATION OF ANCHOVETA FISHING AND PROCESSING INDUSTRY. THE INCIDENT' S SIGNIFICANCE IS ITS CLEAR ANTI- GOVERNMENT FOCUS DESPITE RECENT VISITS TO CHIMBOTE BY GOP MINISTERS WHO MADE SOOTHING STATEMENTS TO THE FISHERMEN. THERE HAVE BEEN OTHER RECENT CASES OF SINAMOS PROPERTY BEING ATTACKED, AND THE SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED THROUGH AREQUIPA GENERAL STRIKE (LIMA 2968), THE MOQUEGUA, CUZCO AND PUNO INCIDENTS OF THE LAST FEW WEEKS AND THE LIMITED- EFFECT CTP GENERAL STRIKE LAST MONDAY WERE ALSO ANTI- MILGOV IN NATURE. THUS FAR, THESE INCIDENTS, EVEN WHEN COMBINED WITH THE POOR ACTUAL TURNOUT FOR ALL POPULAR MANIFESTATIONS SUPPORTING MILGOV DURING LAST SEVERAL MONTHS, DO NOT SEEM LIKELY IN THEMSELVES TO PROVOKE ANY MAJOR CHANGE OF POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC DIRECTION BY THE GOP. THEY DO ADD TO THE PRESSURES NOTED IN LIMA 3149, HOWEVER, AND SHOW THAT WINNING OF SUPPORT FROM THE LOCAL MOSCOW COMMUNISTS, THE PDC, AND ASSORTED " PROGRESSIVES" HAS STILL FAILED TO BRING IT THE MASS POPULAR FOLLOWING WHICH IT DESIRES, PARTICULARLY AMONG THE WORKERS AND STUDENTS WHOM IT INCREASINGLY LABELS AS THE BENEFICIARIES OF ITS PATERNALISTIC PLANS FOR A NEW PERU.

BELCHER

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